—The People's Forum— The News and Observer, Raleigh, N. C.
Thursday, December 21, 1978

Proposition 5 message

To the Editor: You recently printed an editorial from The Fayetteville Observer on Proposition 5, the anti-public smoking referendum in California. ("Puffers, tobacco money prevail in California," Nov 26).

I'm somewhat surprised that a North Carolina newspaper would fail to perceive the real message from the defeat of Proposition 5. After hearing both sides present their case 3.7 million voters or 54.3 percent, rejected the proposal. The fact that non-smokers far outnumber smokers in California (as they do elsewhere) points out that a high percentage of people who don't smoke prefer to see the issue of smoking in public places settled through mutual courtesy rather than by the heavy hand of Big Brother government.

Another interesting fact is that Proposition 5 was rejected by voters in all 58 counties of the state. Even the now legendary Proposition 13 failed to pass in every county. And do the editors realize that the largest contributor to the proponent's side was a commercial, profit-motivated multimillion-dollar firm that operates a quit-smoking clinic? Were they not operating in pursuit of self-interest?

And finally the editors of The New York Times, in a Nov. 27 editorial, point out another reason why common sense seems to have prevailed despite efforts by the anti-smoking lobby to bring about the closest thing to Prohibition since the Volstead Act . Proposition 5 lost heavily (in part) because it was poorly drafted. Opponents were able, with reason, to ridicule the proposition for permitting smoking at rock concerts but not at jazz concerts . Most California voters were not deceived by such blatantly discriminating and inconsistant claims

These are the facts. And as in California , the public has a right to know

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MORE GOOD NEWS

Loma Linda, California -- On November 14, the Loma City Council rejected a proposed "No Smoker's Bill of Rights." Reason: city council members said there was "no outcry from residents or businesses seeking smoking limitations," and they also pointed out "there are a lot more important things to do here."

Loma Linda is the second city in California, following Patterson, to turn down anti-smoking legislation in the wake of the defeat of Prop 5.

Dallas, Texas -- On December 13, the Dallas City Council, by a vote of 7 - 4, voted to set aside a proposal that would have broadened an existing public smoking restriction ordinance. The Public Affairs Department, PM USA, was alerted to the proposal by Larry Glennie, Region 5 Manager,

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